

DC Gazette

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January 1979



DAVID ARMSTRONG ON HARVEY MILK

METRO: MAKING CLEVELAND LOOK GOOD

THE MEDIA REVUE

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DC 20009

YOU CAN BUY a leather-bound "personally autographed" copy of Richard Nixon's memoirs for only \$250 or a clothbound signed edition for a mere \$50. But New York autograph dealer Charles Hamilton says he won't handle the books because "My opinion is that he is not signing" them. The New York Post also quotes autograph expert Mary Benjamin as saying, "I do not believe for one minute that Richard Nixon signed each and every one of those books." Over 13,000 editions are involved. Nixon and his publisher insist the signatures are real.

MADISON, Wisc., has become the first area in the country where TV viewers can watch 'sermonettes' produced by atheists. An organization called the Freedom from Religion Foundation has been running one-minute paid spots on a CBS affiliate to counteract what it says is an overemphasis on religion on the tube. One of the atheists' spots asks the question: "Have you ever wondered why churches don't pay their fair share of property taxes? Are you aware of the increasing ownership of the airwaves by religion?" The group is planning to go nationwide soon.

A NEW STUDY BY THE OGILVY & MATHER advertising agency has concluded that those comparative advertisements — in which a competitor's product is identified by brand name and criticized — may be backfiring. The survey found that when two products are compared in a commercial — and one is alleged to be better than the other — consumers are generally confused. Consumers commonly misidentify the sponsor of the ads, and often mistakenly remember that the brand which was ridiculed was the superior one.

THE LEADERS OF THREE NATIONAL student organizations have blasted President Carter for inviting a student body president to attend a series of White House anti-inflation meetings. The reason, says Karon Cox of the National Student Educational Fund, is that "the student leader is a clown." The charge is levelled against Jim Mallon, who won election on the University of Wisconsin campus as a clown last year after campaigning in a clown costume. He promised to flood the football stadium to stage mock naval battles, convert parking meters to gumball dispensers and to stuff and mount all college deans. Mallon's Pail and Shovel Party also won 29 of the 36 student senate seats. Said Mallon to Associated Press: "All the average student cares about is sex, drugs and rock and roll, in that order."

IF YOU THINK there are too many lawyers around, you're right. According to US News & World Report, there is one lawyer in this country for every 468 people. In 1973, the figure was one lawyer for every 1250 persons and in 1958 one for every 1879 people. At this rate, by around 1981, we will all be lawyers.

TOM SMITH IS a postal carrier in Wilmington Del., who introduced himself to 400 of his new patrons by dropping notes in their mailboxes. Several patrons complained, and now the Post Office is investigating Smith for violations of federal laws prohibiting putting mailable material in a mailbox without proper postage. Smith — a 25 year veteran with the Post Office — could be fined up to \$300 and fired from his job if convicted.

THE PRICE OF making food cans is rising so rapidly that, according to UCal agricultural economist L.T. Wallace, plastics, paper or some other kinds of containers may have to replace metal. Incidentally, Wallace estimates that the cost of tomatoes in a typical can is only about 4½¢. The rest of the price reflects can costs, processing, delivery and profit.

AT LONG LAST, the American Academy of Pediatrics has come out with a sweeping endorsement of breast feeding. The academy says all babies should be breast fed unless the child or mother has some specific physical condition that makes it impossible. Further, it suggests that firms provide breastfeeding facilities in day care centers and that hospital units be modified to accommodate breast feeding.

FEMALE LAWYERS are still getting the short end of the salary stick. This is according to Juris Doctor, a magazine of the legal profession, which reports that men in private law practices earn an average income of \$40,000 annually, while women lawyers only earn about \$25,000.

A NEW STUDY has found that the young children of parents who divorce are usually better off than are those of parents who struggle to save a marriage. University of Virginia psychologist E. Marvis Hetherington says his studies of 144 families — half divorced and half married — indicates that couples who try to save a marriage "for the sake of the kids" are probably committing a major error. The survey found that for both parents and children in a divorce situation, emotional problems almost always grow worse for the first 12 months immediately after the breakup. At this point, he says, the children in divorced homes are worse off than kids in married homes with conflict.

But, he adds, then things get better. Hetherington says that in divorced homes, after the year-long downside, emotional problems subside rapidly. The kids of divorcees begin to find things easier, while those in embattled homes continue to deteriorate emotionally.

A SWEDISH LAW PROFESSOR is crusading for the rather unusual proposal that children should have the legal right to "divorce" their parents.

Dr. Ulla Jacobsson claims that — in her words — "A very large number of 13- to 19-year-olds have serious relationship disturbances with (at least) one parent." Jacobsson says that minors get a raw deal from society in that they have no legal rights to challenge decisions forced upon them by their parents.

The professor says that millions of parents abuse their kids by forcing them to do such things as join a particular church or by violating their children's privacy by opening their mail or reading their diaries.

The solution, according to Jacobsson, would be special "divorce rights" for the kids through which they could initiate legal proceedings to have their custody shifted to another adult.

FORBES MAGAZINE reports that this year up to 60,000 secretarial jobs in the US will go unfilled, and that by 1985, that number may be well above 250,000. The reason for this, Forbes says, is that women who once settled for jobs as secretaries are seeking more challenging work in other fields. Companies are coping with the clerical shortage by hiring less qualified people, using temporary employees, upgrading the title of secretary to names like administrative assistant and executive assistant and by paying secretaries higher salaries.

THE NUCLEAR POWER industry has estimated that its plants must be operated at between 70 and 75% of capacity in order to be competitive with other forms of energy. But a new study finds that, because of defects and safety problems, the average nuclear power plant in the last year operated at only 64% of capacity. Further, the study by Komanoff Energy Associates, notes that the biggest nuclear plants have also been the most inefficient ones. Most of the plants under construction today are of the larger variety.

A CIRCUIT JUDGE in Hawaii has refused to rule on whether a person has a legal right to sunshine. The suit, brought by Grace Siu, tried to stop further construction of an apartment building next to her home, saying that it would block sunlight falling on her solar water heating panels.

Siu argued that the building would reduce the effectiveness of her solar heating system by 70 percent.

Circuit court judge James Burns, however, ruled that Siu was asking the court to "establish the right of direct access to the sun" and that such a matter was for the state legislature, not the courts, to decide.

An attorney for the apartment developer had argued that Siu would not suffer irremediable harm if she could not use her solar heating system. He told the judge, "If she doesn't get the sun, she can go to Hawaii Electric, can't she?"

A JOINT FEDERAL-STATE study in Colorado is finding that the bodies of persons who lived near the government's Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant contain small quantities of weapons-grade plutonium. The EPA says that studies of 97 lung and liver samples from autopsies reveal an abnormally high level of Plutonium 239. The tissues have come from people who lived within a thirty mile radius of the plant, located outside of Denver.

A MEDICAL STUDY AT Ohio State University has found that as the elevations at which people live increases, the cancer death rate drops. Cleaner environments and a change in the "acid-base" balance in the body are possible causes.

THE number of children born with birth defects has doubled within the past 25 years. This is according to Dr. Nikolai Dubinin of the Soviet Institute of General Genetics. The East West Journal quotes Dr. Dubinin as saying that scientists now have records of more than 2000 different substances in the environment which are capable of causing mutations and birth defects and he believes these chemicals are affecting human evolution.

Apple Pie

City Lines

WILDLIFE experts who once feared that animals were being driven away and threatened by expanding town and cities are now reporting that many creatures are, in fact, thriving in urban areas.

The Los Angeles Times says that foxes now have dens in every major American city in their climate zone; the racoon population around cities has exploded despite threats of cars, dogs, and youths shooting air rifles; and numerous species of birds, including hawks and falcons, are multiplying rapidly in urban areas.

The Times says the reason for the animals adapting to civilization so well is the warming climate which causes certain animals to migrate to populated areas; a lack of natural predators in cities; anti-pollution drives resulting in increased animal populations in cleaner places; and the energy crisis of the past five years which has forced highway maintenance crews to let grass and brush sheltering smaller animals grow.

A **TEAM** of weather analysts say it has found that the presence of large cities is having a profound effect in changing US weather patterns.

Stanley Changnon of the Illinois State Water Survey reports that urban areas have become what he calls "heat-islands" which significantly increase the amount of rainfall and the frequency and duration of storms that pass overhead.

According to the Illinois study team, a radar survey of storms has discovered that the mere presence of Chicago has turned drizzles into downpours in neighboring Indiana 50 miles away.

A **NEWLY COMPILED FEDERAL** report warns that most of the major US cities are completely vulnerable to attacks by small bands of terrorists. The report, written for the White House by President Carter's interdepartmental task force on energy, concludes that a mere handful of saboteurs could easily cripple most of America's major cities by disrupting fuel supplies.

The Village Voice has published excerpts of the report, which is titled "Memorandum for the President on Fuel Systems Vulnerability." The document warns that a single saboteur could paralyze Los Angeles by cutting one of several vital natural gas pipelines with a lone grenade. It adds that the entire city of New York could be held for ransom by terrorists on the bridge of a liquified natural gas tanker in New York's harbor.

It also warns that access by terrorists to one of several computer rooms in the southwest could hopelessly disrupt US petroleum supplies.

The task force report concludes by saying the only logical answer to such problems is for increased government surveillance and penetration of suspect groups. It proposes what it calls, "a computer-bank of all such individuals and groups."

Law n' Order

NEWLY RELEASED government documents reveal that a national police intelligence network, funded by the federal government, has been compiling files on political activists who are seemingly engaged in completely legal activities.

According to the documents, these files are being maintained by the "Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit," a nationwide police network which was set up to keep track of organized crime activities.

The LEIU claims about 250 local police departments across the US are members. Its leaders have told congressional committees on several occasions that the group monitors only organized crime figures, not political activists.

NEARLY 1000 pages of FBI documents released under the Freedom of Information Act reveal that the bureau secretly operated an extensive counter-intelligence program to infiltrate and discredit the alternative and underground media during the 1960s and early 70s.

One of the more unusual FBI memos seriously proposed a plan for the FBI to spray alternative newspapers with a chemical stench. Other memos indicate that J. Edgar Hoover may have killed this plan before it was implemented.

Many other FBI operations against the alternative press, however, were employed. One document indicated that the FBI produced bogus editions of Liberation News Service in the laboratory by matching the LNS paper, ink and format and then creating and mailing out releases that carried misinformation.

Another document reveals that the bureau established a bogus college newspaper called the Denver Arrow in order to be able to subscribe to College Press Service. The FBI even paid the lower "member discount" offered by College Press in 1972.

Memos pertaining to the Underground Press Syndicate indicate the bureau conducted mail openings, physical stakeouts of the office, and obtained and copied the group's bank records, credit card records, postage meter records, phone bills and income tax reports.

The documents also reveal that FBI agents in a number of US cities approached private printers who were printing alternative newspapers and successfully talked them into raising their printing rates substantially or even into cancelling the printing contracts completely. The FBI documents were obtained and released by a Washington, DC, research group called Public Eye.

This story, although readily available to the conventional media, has been largely ignored by it. Probably they were just too busy covering Myron Farber.

The Body Beat

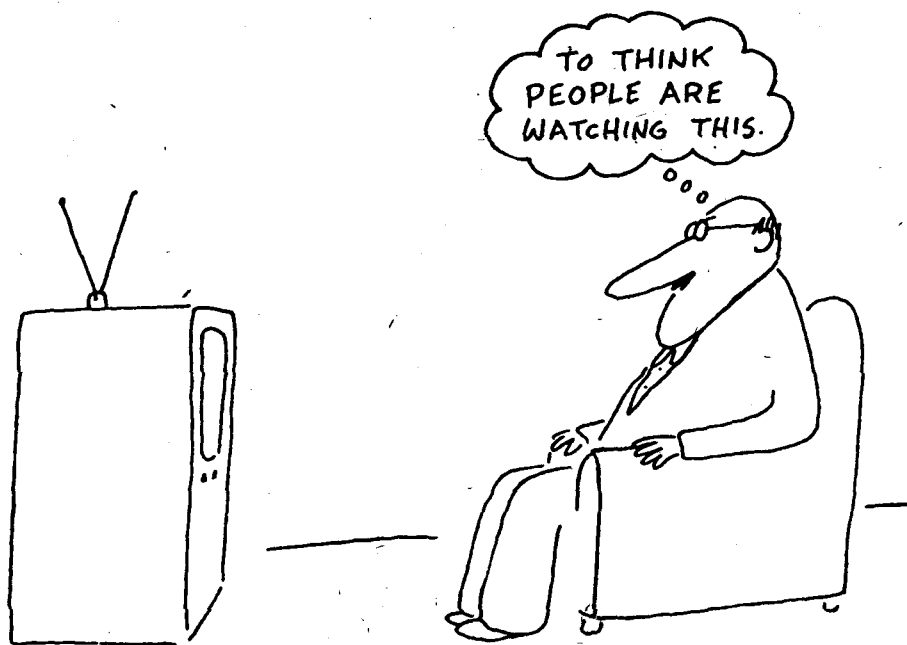
THERE'S A BUMPER sticker that reads: "What we need is stronger rats." It may not be so funny. From the Thermo Electron Corporation comes the discovery of cancer-causing substances in the special animal feed that is given laboratory mice and rats. The feed was recommended by the National Institutes of Health and was specially formulated to be free of disease-producing chemicals. Unfortunately, according to Thermo Electron, it now turns out that the feed contains nitrosamines, powerful substances known to cause cancer in animals. Science magazine says the new discovery raises the possibility that lab animals in the past who came down with cancer after being exposed to other suspect chemicals may have actually contracted the disease from the feed.

BRITAIN'S leading manufacturer of women's underclothing and the Sears Roebuck company both report that the shape of women is changing. Tailors for the Berlei Company measured 4000 women and found that over the past 25 years women have become more tube shaped — taller, with smaller breasts and hips and thicker waists. The Sears survey found a similar move towards what it called "a straightening of the curves." A Berlei official said, "One might even say that [women] are becoming more man-shaped."

A **MICHIGAN STATE UNIVIERSTY** survey has found that 40% of the 9-11 year-olds they questioned took aspirin at least once a week, most without their parent's knowledge. Half of the 6th to 12th graders questioned said they took aspirin regularly. When asked why, some children said they didn't feel well, some that they had a cold, and some that they felt they needed one. The overuse of aspirin can cause kidney damage.

THE AMERICAN Chemical Society reports that extracts of wheat sprouts, mung beans and lentils may possess very powerful cancer-preventing properties. Three doctors from the University of Texas have told a Chemical Society convention that high levels of chlolo-phyll in the various grain sprouts may be responsible for inhibiting the mutagenic effects of chemicals. The researchers say that when mutagenic chemicals are administered to living cells along with extract of the sprouts, 99% of the mutagenic effects are cancelled out. They are currently experimenting to see if these grain sprouts can help prevent certain types of cancer in mice.

HUMAN NATURE Magazine says that a new study by Dr. William Darby of Vanderbilt University has found that while alcoholism is destructive, moderate drinking not only makes life more pleasant, but also is a healthy food. The doctor says that moderate alcohol consumption may reduce the risk of heart attacks, lessen symptoms of exhaustion and discomfort and encourage healthy social interaction. What is moderate consumption? According to Dr. Darby, it's a daily intake of up to 3 ounces of 80 proof alcohol — or 11 ounces of table wine or three 12-ounce bottles of beer.



C. Barott
Newfield News

An American Report

AMERICAN JOURNAL

David Armstrong

DEC. 1 — I PLANNED to interview San Francisco supervisor Harvey Milk this week. I wanted to ask him what it was like to be America's only acknowledged gay public official and what his first year in office had done to him. I won't be doing that story now. Harvey Milk was gunned down Nov. 27 by the same law and order advocate who took San Francisco mayor George Moscone's life that day.

I first tried to arrange a meeting with Milk when he was elected last year for a prestigious daily newspaper on Long Island known for its serious reporting. Milk was from Long Island and he was known as a thoughtful, provocative talker. When I told an editor there about the proposed interview, he allowed it was an interesting idea, but wanted to know more about the spider webs that were raining from the sky over San Francisco.

"The what?" I asked him.

"The spider webs," he said. It was on the AP wire.

I told him I didn't know anything about the spider webs from the sky and rang off, bemused. I didn't speak to the editor from the prestigious paper known for serious reporting after that.

Milk was openly homosexual, and that made him "different," but his lively mind embraced a broad range of concerns, and people came to respect him. In the midst of his unrelenting campaign for gay rights, Milk championed the needs of neighborhoods against the schemes of downtown developers, fought for civil liberties for women and minorities, worked for the decriminalization of marijuana and spoke out for the rights of labor — not the Big Cigars atop the union hierarchy but the voiceless ones, the rank-and-file. That was not the fashionable thing to do in a town that, like many American cities, is exchanging its historic blue collar base for a white collar service economy. But it was the right thing to do, and Harvey Milk did it.

Milk, by all accounts, was a charming man. He was an effective public speaker with a first-class brain who was once a Wall Street financial analyst. When he spoke out publicly against the US invasion of Cambodia in 1970, Milk lost his plush job. Soon afterwards, he came out of the closet, then opened a camera shop on Castro Street, in the heart of San Francisco's gay ghetto. He was elected to the city's governing board of supervisors in 1977.

The public Harvey Milk was self-assured, but privately he harbored a secret dread. He was convinced that some fanatical gay-hater would try to kill him and would perhaps succeed. In the midst of the partying and garlands of electoral success, Harvey Milk tape-recorded a message for his friends and followers detailing what to do if he was assassinated.

Dan White, Milk's conservative fellow supervisor and eventual assassin, was the personification of Milk's dread. A former star athlete,

paratrooper, firefighter and cop, White did not understand the "encroachment" on his city by what he called "social deviants." And what he did not understand, he feared and despised.

Dan White's is the I'm-mad-as-hell-and-I'm-not-going-to-take-it-anymore/ Proposition 13/ Kojak mentality taken to its logical extreme. "You must realize," read one of White's campaign brochures last year, "there are thousands upon thousands of frustrated, angry people such as yourselves waiting to unleash a fury that can and will eradicate the malignancies which blight our city."

White wasn't too clear about specifics, but he was sure of one thing: he supported the death penalty for serious crimes, like murder. He was elected.

When San Francisco's gay community asked that a street be closed to traffic for a public celebration, White voted no. When Milk authored a strong gay rights ordinance, White's was the only dissenting vote. And when White unleashed his own fury at being denied reappointment after resigning his supervisor's seat, Milk, who opposed the reappointment, was eradicated.

There is no point in ascribing the Milk and Moscone murders, or those of the 900 in Guyana, to some weird vibrations from a 'kook capital' of the world. When a society runs up against its own internal contradictions, as ours is doing, the effects are felt everywhere. People strike out, often against their best interests, and the understanding born of patience becomes a luxury.

That is the true meaning of the nationwide 'taxpayers' revolt,' the results of which are now becoming obvious. Rooted in legitimate frustration, but adroitly manipulated by entrenched interests, the tax revolt has "trimmed the fat" not by cutting back career bureaucrats, but by bleeding the marginal people whose livelihoods could not be guaranteed by the private sector in the first place. It has not returned power to the grassroots, but has further centralized it in state and federal government.

This frustration was tapped further by the virulent campaigns against homosexuals spearheaded by the likes of Anita Bryant and John Briggs. Scapegoats were needed, and, in homosexuals, scapegoats were found. There is an organic, if not literal, connection between the gay witchhunts of the past two years and the death of Harvey Milk.

Dan White now sits in solitary confinement, awaiting trial. He has, it is said, a steady stream of visitors and 24-hour access to a telephone. If he is convicted, he will be sentenced under the new capital punishment law he promoted.

Harvey Milk is gone. I never met him. I feel cheated somehow.

Energy Resources

Center for Renewable Resources...1028 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, D.C. 20036...policy research, networking, consumer information, legal services...publications on fundraising for solar projects.

Citizen's Energy Project...1413 K Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005...Non-profit research and educational organization...provides local and regional community groups with organizing assistance and practical information for citizen action...monthly newsletter, *People and Energy*, \$10 a year...excellent resource listings...publications list includes over 50 books and reports.

Community Services Administration, Washington, D.C. 20506...Richard Saul...ask for CSA Instruction 6143-1a which explains the Emergency Energy Conservation Program...describes how low-income individuals and families can obtain funding for energy conservation projects such as weatherization.

Department of Energy, Washington, D.C. 20545...Joyce Henderson...in 1978, DOE had \$3 million to fund projects under Appropriate Technology Small Grants Program...\$8 million for 1979...contact Washington office to find out which region to apply to.

Environmental Action Foundation...Dupont Circle Building, Room 724, Washington, D.C. 20036...various projects deal with issues concerning utilities, solid waste and clean water...monthly newsletter from Utility Project, *Powerline*, \$15 a year...*Utility Action Guide* lists resources on the electric power industry, and *How to Challenge Your Local Electric Utility* is available for \$1.50.

Environmental Action Reprint Service (EARS)...2239 E. Colfax, Denver, Colorado 80206...solar/alternative energy and nuclear power information...large selection of mail order books, articles and energy catalogs.

National Center for Appropriate Technology...P.O. Box 3838, Butte, MT 59701...information for low-income individuals...newsletter covers all aspects of appropriate technology...small grants available.

National Science Foundation...Science for Citizens Program, Office of Science and Society, Washington, D.C. 20550...supports forums, workshops, conferences on issues of concern to communities—environment, energy, health...gives 20 grants a year in the \$20,000-40,000 range...supports public service scientist residences...pays scientists to spend a year working with community groups, public interest research groups, and so on.

National Solar Heating and Cooling Information Center...P.O. Box 1607, Rockville, Maryland 20580...toll free 800-523-2929, in Pennsylvania call 800-462-4983...operated by HUD and DOE...complete service facility on any aspect of solar heating and cooling...resource listings of publications, centers, bibliographies, fact sheets and directories.

National Intervenors, Inc....Annotated energy bibliography, a must for everyone concerned about nuclear energy issues, 60 pages, \$2.00...Order from National Intervenors, 1413 K Street, N.W. (8th floor), Washington, D.C. 20036.

Compiled by "Of the People,"
newsletter of the Public Interest Research Group, 1329 E St. NW (Suite 1127) DC 20004.

ACTION NOTES



NON-PARENTS NEW NAME: The National Organization for Non-Parents has changed its name to the National Alliance for Optional Parenthood. The group was formed seven years ago "as the first organized attempt in history to change the perception of parenthood from an obligation to an option and to work for acceptance of those who choose not to have children." They're still at 3 North Liberty St., Baltimore, Md. 21201 (301-752-7456)

SPLIT WOOD NOT ATOMS: That's one of the bumper stickers you can get for \$1 each from PIRG of Michigan. Others include "No Nukes" and "Conservation Creates Jobs." Write PIRGIM, 590C Hollister Bldg, Lansing, MI 48933.

TAPING IT TOGETHER: A new video manual written for community groups by Urban Planning Aid, 120 Boylston St. (527), Boston MA 02116. The manual is \$1.75 including postage and covers cameras, microphones, lighting, troubleshooting, editing and distribution.

GRANDCHILD OF S-1: The American Civil Liberties Union is warning that the "Grandchild of S-1" is going to be introduced into the 96th Congress when it convenes this month. S-1 was the original proposed recodification of federal criminal statutes, which was designed to update and get rid of outmoded laws on the books. Many critics, however, said it only made matters worse, adding new repressive laws to the penal code. After a five year battle, S-1 and its successor, S-1437, were shelved. Now, says the ACLU, Senator Ted Kennedy, a staunch supporter of these earlier bills, will introduce similar legislation once again — as head of the powerful Senate Judiciary Committee. The ACLU says it has mounted a concerted campaign to defeat the "Grandchild of S-1" and that it has the support of a coalition of some 40 organizations who are opposed to it.

STOP CAMPAIGN: The US Olympic Committee has filed a countersuit against an association of religious and criminal justice reform groups called "STOP." "STOP" stands for "Stop the Olympic Prison." Its members contend that the US Olympic Committee persuaded federal prison officials to supply \$22 million to build a facility at Lake Placid, NY, primarily to house Olympic athletes. Following the Olympics in 1980, the facility will be turned into a medium security prison for juveniles. STOP organizers say the prison is not needed and that even if it were, it should not have been built at Lake Placid. The subject of the suit and countersuit is a poster which depicts a prisoner's hand and flaming torch thrust through prison bars and the Olympic rings under the words "Stop the Olympic Prison." The US Olympic Committee says that the use of the word Olympic and the symbols demeans and disparages the good will of the US Olympic movement in the US and throughout the world.

STOP members, however, argue that the use of the Olympics to build a prison also disparages the good name of the Olympic symbol. The organizers point out that if the Soviet Union were intending to turn an Olympics site into a prison, there would be a great outcry from the US. Info: STOP, c/o New York State Council of Churches, 3049 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13224.



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THE WRECK OF THE METRO

IF THIS WERE Cleveland, Metro's bondholders would be moving in to repossess the farecard machines. Fortunately, this isn't Cleveland. The federal government, in effect, co-signed the note for Metro's debt so one can go along happily ignoring the fact that Metro is essentially bankrupt — with a debt sixty times that of Cleveland which it can't pay.

Metro is probably the largest fiscal disaster in urban America outside of New York City. It is beginning to run out of stratagems to conceal this. It wants the federal government to pay more, but the feds, pressed by other cities who also need transit funds, is showing frustration with Metro's panhandling. Metro still has some federal highway money it could tap, but this, too, is not a bottomless pit. It has used borrowed money to meet payments on borrowed money, but you can't keep doing that. It is looking for a massive increase in regional taxes, but this is the age of Proposition 13 and there may be stiff opposition to such a bail-out scheme.

And the problem is not just the capital costs. Current deficits for Metro are running at about 14% of the deficit for all of Amtrak and some experts predict that by 1990 the deficit may reach \$500 million. It's hard to visualize \$500 million, but think about Amtrak again. Amtrak is currently losing about \$600 million a year and there is strong support for a drastic reduction in that nationwide system. We are talking about a local system that may become as costly as our national system is today.

But, as we said, this isn't Cleveland. Despite the fact that Metro has misled the public from the beginning about costs and ridership, despite the fact that it has run out of money to pay for its errors, there is still Uncle Sam. The feds would obviously rather take a larger loss on Metro than be left holding the whole bag, so complex negotiations have been underway, with the feds and the local Metro-boosters trying to come up with a mutually acceptable level of local and federal contributions.

The public, however, has not been in on the negotiations, which assume, for example, that the taxpayers of DC will willingly provide the equivalent of a 20% increase in the sales tax (on top of steadily rising fares) to pay for the completion of Metro. The Washington administration actually preferred a payroll tax to a sales tax, but to give you some feel for the numbers involved, you could raise equivalent sums from the property tax by raising everyone's tax bill by 27%. We are obviously talking big bucks.

The cost to the federal government would be much more. There is considerable justification for this: the feds helped to get us into this mess and they should help bail us out. But keep your fingers crossed that no national publication discovers that the federal government might limit its liability by a factor in the billions by ceasing to acquiesce in completion of the system. If they do find out how much Metro is costing the

US taxpayers, you can kiss good-bye not only the rest of Metro but representation in Congress as well.

The story is there, but it has been skillfully concealed by the local media which wants Metro built whatever the cost to its readership or American taxpayers. The Post and the Star have consistently downplayed uncomfortable information about Metro. For example, a startling memo from Chester Davenport, Assistant Transportation Secretary, was given only passing mention in a Post story about Metro, even though it is one of the most damning documents concerning Metro's accounting and projection procedures.

The memo, concerning Metro's so-called "Alternatives Analysis and Financial Plan," was written on July 24 and obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by Edmond Kanwit, chair of the Committee for Metro Accountability and one of the most knowledgeable persons in the field of mass transit.

The "Alternatives Analysis" was prepared last year as part of the condition for further federal funding of Metro. Here is what Davenport said when he saw the draft report:

"Incremental analysis [is] not discussed. . . Although the report contains charts on incremental analyses the data and their significance is not discussed in the report." (In lay terms, what this means is that the report was not an alternative analysis at all; it did not consider the options of a foreshortened Metro system, incremental increases, etc. In another memo, also obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, C. Russell Scoville, manager of Transportation's Metro program team, notes, "I asked whether WMATA staff would be able to provide ridership, operating costs and deficit data for alternate levels of system implementation (i.e., 64 miles, the 77 and 82 miles that could be built with the Interstate transfer funding, the 100 miles and the 100 miles plus Tysons Corner and Branch Avenue extensions). The response to this question was — there is only time enough to develop the recommended financing package. . . .")

"Patronage is significantly overstated (especially for the rail system). . . WMATA is forecasting 323 million rail trips per year for the max system for 1990. This can be contrasted to a rail ridership in Chicago of only 120 million per year in 1976, when Chicago had a population, employment, and rail system mileage roughly equivalent to that forecast [for this area] in 1990. Further, the 1990 estimated total WMATA transit ridership is three times the current level, representing a compounded annual growth rate of 9.6% for the period 1978 through 1990. This is difficult to believe when the opening of new segments to date has resulted in only a marginal increase in total system ridership. . . . In our opinion the total transit ridership is likely to be some 30% below the forecast."

"Operating cost [is] understated — Rail operating costs are based on the 1974 Louis Klauder estimates instead of actual experience. As a result, it is likely that rail operating costs are understated."

"Operating deficits understated — The alternatives analysis indicates that the 1990 Metro operating deficits for the recommended system will be \$46.8 million. This may be contrasted to the current operating deficit of \$81 million. This unrealistic operating deficit forecast results from the optimistic assumptions which have been used for ridership, fare policies, and operating costs. We know of no system where the deficit has actually been reduced as the system expands and the ridership is increased. . . We feel that the financial analysis should address a range of possible operating deficits with a maximum value of around \$500 million."

How badly Metro has estimated things in the past is shown in Scoville's memo where he contrasted projected ridership with actual figures. As of the opening of Phase IIA, Metro was only off on its projected rail ridership by 3% but its bus ridership projections were in error by a factor of 44%. The net result was that total transit ridership was 31% below what Metro predicted. These figures confirm our May story which pointed out the degree to which Metro was boosting its rail figures artificially by strangling the bus system. (Gazette, May 1978, "How Metro Hijacks Riders for Its Subway.")

What is amazing about all this is that despite the warnings of two key aides, Transportation Secretary Brock Adams has taken such a conciliatory attitude towards Metro mismanagement and misforecasting. Some speculate that this is the result of political pressure from area Congressmembers. It may also involve an element of bluff — sending the Metro panhandlers back to their own constituents for more money and waiting to see what happens. But, in any case, Adams seems to have ignored the caveats of his own staff, failed to require completion of a serious alternative analysis and is engaged in essentially political, rather than transportation or fiscal, decisions.

There is a feeling in some quarters, spurred on by the dailies's unrelenting boosterism, that we are irrevocably committed to finishing Metro no matter what. But we could still save \$3 billion in capital costs and perhaps as much as \$125 million a year in operating deficits if we started looking at the facts rather than at the flak. Metro is our fiscal Vietnam; we can only make matters worse by continuing on the present course.

Metro was originally planned in a thicket of faulty assumptions. Alternatives to a subway were not considered. Ridership and population growth were overestimated; operating and building costs were underestimated. Further, the system was designed accord-

ing to early sixties assumptions about commuter traffic patterns. Not only did the wheel-spoke design undervalue the extent of cross-county commuting in the suburbs, it failed to foresee that, for example, employment in DC between 1972 and 1977 would grow by only about 4000 jobs while suburban employment would go up by nearly 130,000. It was, in short, the wrong system designed in the wrong pattern for the wrong people at the wrong price.

We need no longer be ignorant of this, but Metro continues to make unrealistic projections as it attempts to wheedle still more money out of us and the federal government. It assumes, as a case in point, that fares should be tied to the cost of living. Current thinking is that fares should rise at half the rate of the CPI. But construction costs rise so much more rapidly than does the overall CPI, that this assumption may produce figures that are in error by 100%.

There is fortunately one group that is staying on Metro's case. The Committee for Metro Accountability (4802 Guilford Rd., College Park, Md. 20740) has been doing much of the current probing necessary to get behind Metro's steel curtain of deceptive promotion. COMA supports completion of a 67-mile system, which would save about 25% of operating deficits and \$3.5 billion (before interest charges) in capital costs. With the key elements of the subway already in place, the plan represents a sensible strategic retreat. Nothing would stop us from adding mileage when we found the money (currently it costs about \$70 million a mile) but in the meantime, we could see what the existing system is really doing — as opposed to what Metro said it would. We would also have some money to consider alternatives — like uncovering the scores of miles of streetcar tracks, Washington's hidden treasure from the days when it had a mass transit system that worked.

If we really want to get commuters out of their Rosenthal Chevrolets, the best place to start is not to make yet another \$3 billion dollar mistake.

Sanitary Excellence

THE INTERSTATE COMMISSION on the Potomac River Basin has just published five strip maps of the Potomac. You can get them for \$4 from the Commission at 1055 First Street, Rockville, Md. . . If you want a clean meal, try the Washington Hilton, Napoleon's on Conn. Ave. or Arthur Treacher's on Wisc. Ave. These establishments all got the coveted DC Gov's

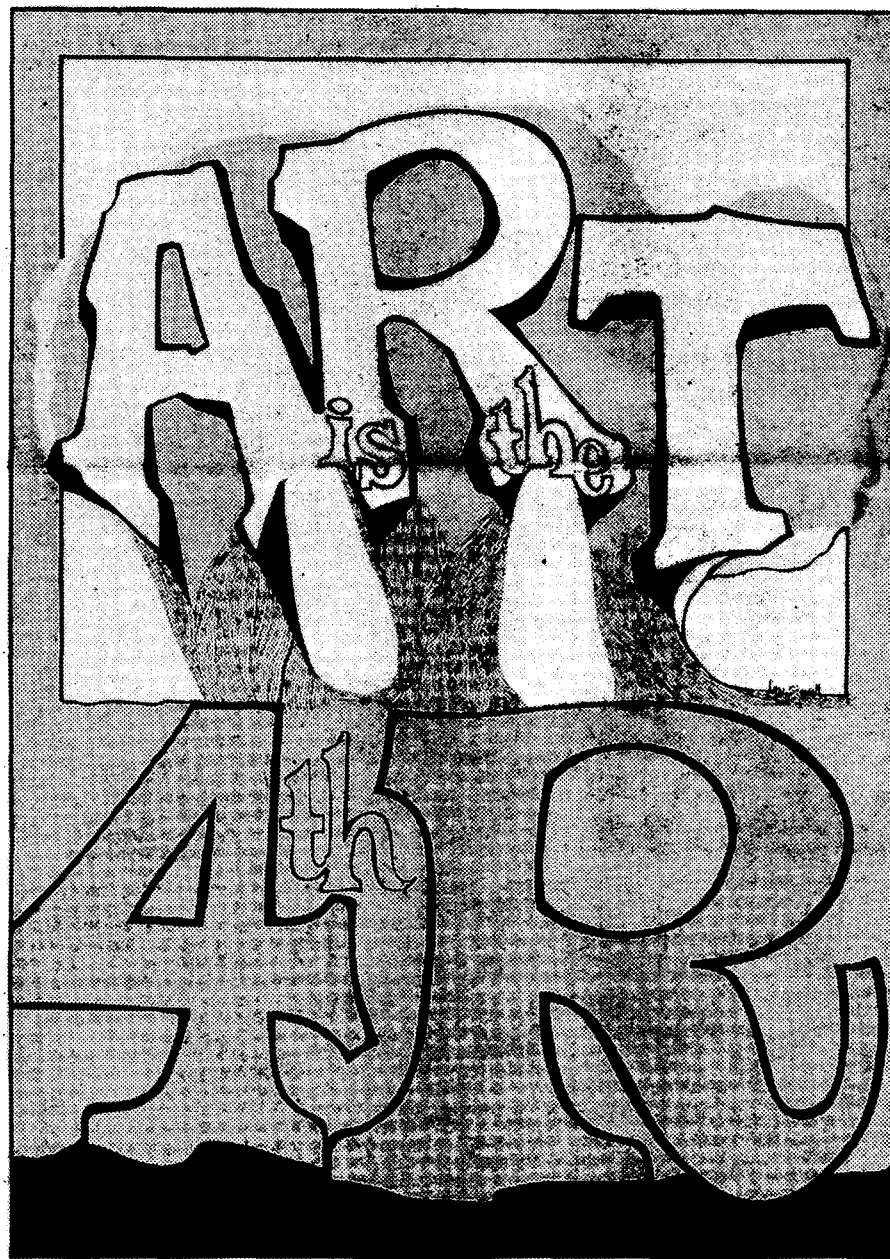
award for sanitary excellence. Oh, and we almost forgot. So did the Covington & Burling Cafeteria. . . Teachers at Bryan Elementary School have an average of 15.2 years experience, the highest in the city. Lowest years of experience were at Oyster (9.5), followed by Eaton and Fletcher-Johnston (9.5)

YOU CAN GET A do-it-yourself coffin from the St. Francis Burial and counselling service. Prices start at \$130 for a casket kit you can build in about two hours. Can be used, the society says, as a hall bench, coffee table or wine rack until you're ready. Call 234-5613 for details. . . Only place in America where they drink more than in DC is Nevada. That's according to a recent Rutgers University study. . . Don't be surprised if Barry has a short honeymoon with the city council. Knives are already being sharpened on the first floor of the DeeCee DeeBee. . . Despite the efforts of

Carol Schwartz, Vince Reed, Sam Starobin and others, William Spaulding refused to let a \$100,000 reprogramming item out of his education committee so construction could begin on John Eaton School's modernization project. That could mean months more delay which would end up costing the city as much as Spaulding thought he might be saving. . . Spaulding has been a lousy education committee chair, but even councilmembers who ridicule him in private will probably vote to make him chair of the crucial government operations committee. That's politics.

Education axed

ARRINGTON DIXON, incidentally, plans to do away with the education committee entirely — which won't help the rocky road of public education in this town one bit. . . A tip of the hat to ANC 3D, which, instead of using up all its money on administrative expenses as some ANCs have done, managed to come up with \$4500 for a tot lot and \$8000 for the Mann School Community Center. . . Our friends at the Rock Creek Monitor checked up on a couple of things that were supposed to be happening and found out they weren't. Those families who were meant to be moving into their Seaton Street homes aren't. Some observers in the community blame the city's housing department which was supposed to be overseeing the renovation project. The Monitor also discovered that fewer than



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A Silkscreen Print by Lou Stovall

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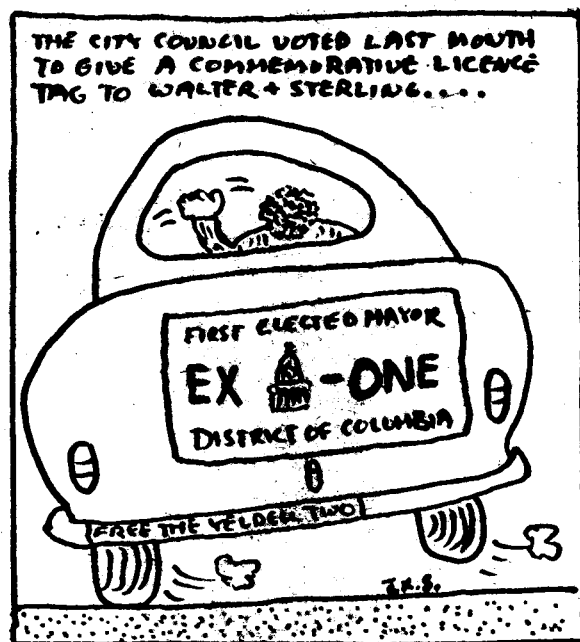
one hundred persons have registered transactions under the speculation tax that went into effect last July. No one in the government is bothering to enforce it.

GU HOLDS A SYMPOSIUM on divorce Jan. 22. The public is invited. Call 625-7815 for information and registration forms. . . . New organization in town is the DC Solar Coalition. Wants to make solar technologies and local energy policy a major concern of local citizens. You can find them on the 8th floor of 1413 K NW or call Dave Cawley at 232-4108. . . . The Retired Senior Volunteer Program needs senior citizens with some free time to work on various projects. Call 232-6510.

A friend at last?

THOSE benches along upper Connecticut Ave. are thanks to the efforts of the Chevy Chase Citizens Assn. . . . The long-embattled Providence Hospital site on Capitol Hill is being converted (temporarily at least) into a park. Congressional types are still eyeing it as a possible parking lot. . . . If you are a father and get divorced in DC, there's no longer a presumption that your ex-wife should have custody of the kids. The DC Court of Appeals said so recently in a big case. . . . Silver Lining Dept: Ron Dellums is in line to take over the House District Committee. He's one of the few true friends of the city in Congress. Even supports statehood.

GUESS WHO the new head of the Board of Trade is? Our old friend, Ollie Carr Jr. But not everything's been going well for Ollie, though. Carr tried to sue the hell out of Phil Brown, a West End property owner, for maliciously interfering with his business of developing property in the WE. Claimed Brown, through malicious acts and false statements, unjustly opposed and incited others to oppose an alley closing Carr wanted, depriving him of profits he might reasonably have expected. The lower court nixed that and now the Court of Appeals has done the same thing, telling Carr:



Appellent... is claiming interference with expectations of profit that were wholly contingent upon the decision of two governmental bodies viz. the Transportation Committee and the Board of Zoning Adjustment. These bodies are required to make such decisions only after hearing interested parties. Consequently, opposition to any application before either body is invited so that an informed and prudent decision, after having heard all viewpoints, is rendered. The "expectancies" which appellent claims in his action... are in our view simply too remote, depending as they do on governmental action. . . . [The] person who is "interfering" with the applicant's petition is participating in procedures fixed by statute which specifically invite opposition.

If Carr had won his extraordinary case, it would have opened up the possibility of developer law suits against citizen witnesses in all kinds of planning and zoning cases.

ST. CECILIA'S on Capitol Hill would be closed if the Archdiocese's new school consolidation plan goes through. . . . John Hechinger, who is on the US delegation up at the UN, says he is "considering bringing the case of Washington before the Committee of 24." That's the group that is meant to oversee decolonization. Wonder how John would explain why we shouldn't have statehood. Decolonization is decolonization, Gertrude always used to say. . . . Laura Murray referred to the Community for Creative NonViolence in the Star recently as an "aggressively religious Christian group," as opposed, we guess, to the more typical passively religious Christian groups. Look folks, you're just mean to believe it; you're not meant to practice it.

Smart cop

NEXT TIME you talk about dumb cops, don't do it in front of Deputy Chief Lloyd Smith, the new commander of the Second District. He's a magna cum laude from AU. . . . Jo Butler has been reelected chair of the Statehood Party. . . . Channing Phillips is going to be handling congressional liaison for the National Endowment for the Humanities. . . . DC Citizens for Better Public Education has revised and reprinted its booklet on standardized testing. Send \$1.25 to them at 95 M SW, DC 20024 for a copy. . . . Antonelli-Yeldell trial starts all over again Feb. 19. . . . Teachers' contract with the DC schools runs out Jan. 15. . . . The Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee holds a seminar course on "Problems of Central Planning and Democratic Controls Under Capitalism and Socialism." It starts in January at GU. Registration is \$10. Call 296-7693 for information.

THE DC STATEHOOD PARTY holds its convention January 27 at All Soul's. . . . Ann Brown did her annual survey of toy prices around the area and found, among other things, that Murphy's downtown was charging 9% more on ten toy items than was the Murphy's on upper Wisconsin Avenue. Well, that's one way to revitalize downtown. . . . Sullivan's, also on upper Wisconsin

THIS HORSE THINKS METRO CAN START OUT THE NEW YEAR WITH NEW IDEAS



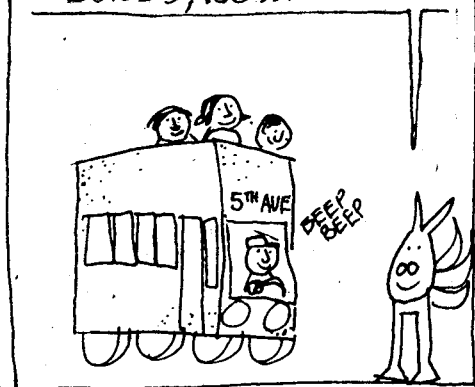
ONE OF METRO'S PROBLEMS IS THAT PEOPLE DON'T LIKE RIDING THEIR BUSES...



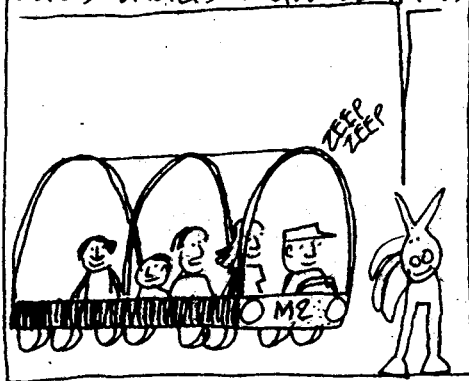
MAYBE METRO COULD LOOK AT CABLE CARS - PEOPLE LIKE THEM...



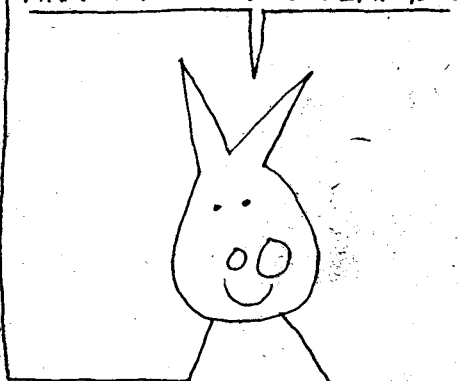
PEOPLE USED TO LIKE RIDING N.Y.C.'S DOUBLE-DECKER BUSES, TOO...



OTHER BUS SHAPES COULD BE ENJOYED, TOO - FUTURISTIC GLASS VEHICLES COULD BE TRIED...



SUCH SPECIAL SHAPES COULD BE ON SPECIAL ROUTES, TO HELP MAKE THEM EASY TO REMEMBER



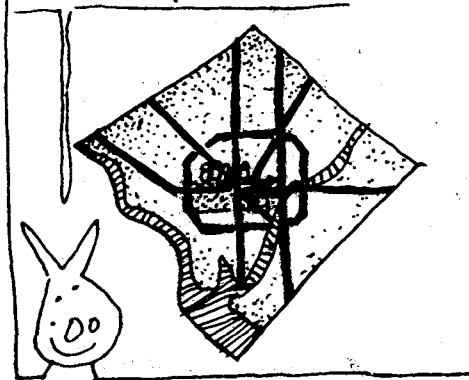
CONN. AVE. BUSES PASS THE ZOO - THEY COULD BE MOBILE ANIMAL MURALS...



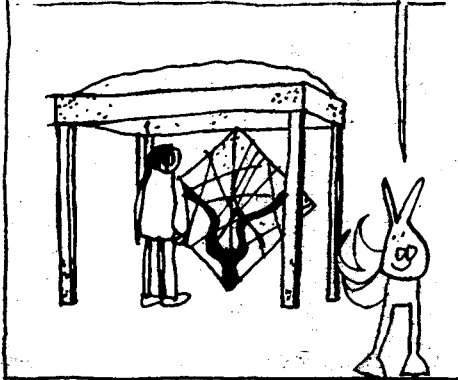
BUREAUCRATS MIGHT OBJECT TO THIS, BUT SURELY THEY'D LOVE MALL BUSES MADE MONUMENTAL...



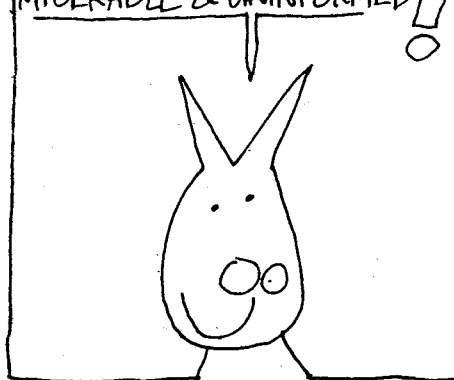
OR, ROUTES COULD BE COLOR-CODED: BUSES & STREET LIGHTS COULD BE PAINTED TO MATCH...



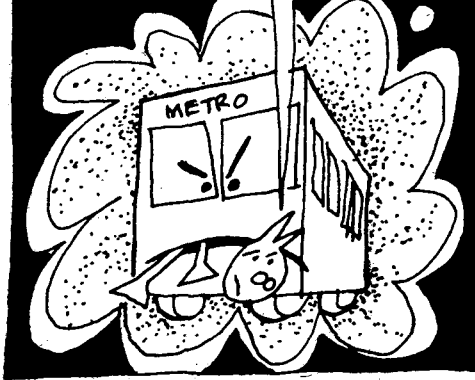
AND, TO MAKE ROUTES EVEN MORE CLEAR, BUS SHELTERS COULD HAVE MAPS...



METRO CAN CHANGE BUS RIDERS DON'T HAVE TO BE MISERABLE & UNINFORMED



WELL, I USED TO THINK METRO COULD CHANGE





This is progress?

Two of the photo-pairs of old and new Washington now on exhibit at the Woodrow Wilson House, 2340 S NW. Photo at left is the old Roger Smith Hotel at 18th & Penna. NW, which was torn down for the structure shown in the photo at right.

Photos: Library of Congress (left); Earl James (right)

sin, came out looking good this year, but only because it happened to be having a 20% off sale at the time of the survey. . . . Hotel space is tight in DC during the week, but it drops off on weekends when the conventioners go home. If you have friends coming into town during the week, tell them to book early.

THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS rejected the petitions of the convention center referendum group last month, so the matter heads for the courts. . . The BOE also dropped its plan to force the mayor and other top officials to vacate their offices if formally accused of conflict of interest. Even as ardent reformers as we found the plan a little wild. What would happen, for example, if a mayor was accused of conflict of interest right before a reelection contest, won reelection but couldn't take office because the issue hadn't been decided?

A GROUP OF Takoma Park (both DC and Maryland type) residents have formed Historic Takoma Inc. — dedicated to preservation in the area. Takoma Park was the first railroad suburb. The Maryland side already has been included on the National Register. The DCers are trying for a listing. Historic Takoma plans to publish walking tours as well as teaching units for children. Info: Ellen Marsh, 270-5348.

COME FEBRUARY 4, the minimum wage for domestic workers goes up to \$3.50 an hour. Baby sitters and "casual yardworkers" will get \$2.90 an hour. There are an estimated 9000 domestic workers in the city. . . Another sign of the spin-offs of Metro: the number of cabs on the streets of DC has dropped 15% in recent months, says a lawyer for the cabbies, who are seeking an emergency fare increase. Says lawyer Daniel Smith: "Certainly Metro has afforded us much competition, taken away a lot of the ridership. . . and will continue to do so."

THE SECOND EDITION of the public school's brochure, "Welcome to Our Schools," is now available.

It has a lot of good hard information (numbers to call, budget facts etc.) and you can get copies from your local school. Copies for civic, social, church and professional organizations can be obtained by calling 724-4044. . . . First bargaining unit for doctors has been formed at DC General. 193 employees involved. . . . Arrington Dixon has been elected to the board of the National League of Cities. . . . Because of the DC gov's exquisite way of burying important information, many homeowners didn't realize they had to fill out a form to get their homeowner's exemption. Now, thanks to Marion Barry (qua chair of the finance & revenue committee not as mayor-elect), the city is going to make a separate mailing of the exemption application. Reports Polly Shackleton: "Enclosed will be a bold printed insert to advise the taxpayer in plain English that they need to fill out the application to obtain substantial relief benefits." The Department of Finance and Revenue "also plans attention getting envelopes." Watch for them.

No shelter

IF SALT, the CIA, recognizing China and Andrew Young all fail the Carter Administration there is still Mount Weather. Mount Weather is a nuclear fallout shelter in Bluemont, Va., to which the executive branch is expected to flee minutes before Armageddon. It has been under expansion for the past twenty years, but now the Carter folks are having second thoughts. According to the Los Angeles Times, some of Carter's top aides are recommending that Mount Weather be closed. They think it is wasteful and antiquated in view of increasingly accurate atomic warheads. The newspaper quotes one aide as saying, "The guy who runs Mount Weather was concerned about the ventilation system. I told him not to worry because the ventilation system will probably be in Ohio after the attack." The advisors think the only solution in case of atomic war would be to board a fleet of airplanes and stay airborne throughout the nuclear attack. Which leaves the rest of us crowding aboard the WMAL traffic copter.

THE LATEST FBI listing of 25 cities with the highest rates of violent crime doesn't even mention DC. You stand a better chance of getting beat up or murdered in New York (number one), Miami (2nd), Los Angeles (3rd), Baltimore (4th), Las Vegas (5th), Charleston (6th), Orlando (9th), Little Rock (16th), Daytona Beach (19th) and Waco, Texas (22nd). . . If you tried to get hold of Polly Shackleton and couldn't over the holidays, it's because she was in Egypt. . . . Another Ward Three activist, Ken Giles, leaves for the Middle East this month with a group of American Jews and Christians called "Middle East Peace Now." They plan to meet with government officials, PLO leaders, members of the Israeli Peace Now movement and Palestinians on the West Bank.

WE LEARN from the Board of Trade News that a recent upbeat Associated Press story about Washington and its business prospects was a puff piece planted by the Board. Says the BOT News: "Douglas Poretz & Associates, Inc., a public relations and advertising firm working with the Business Development Bureau, coordinated the research for the article which has appeared in numerous newspapers since its release."

THE ROASTING she received at the hand's of Lyn Rossellini of the Star is not likely to improve her temperment, so composing room workers at the Washington Post had better take seriously their publisher's comments at a recent meeting of the New York Society of Newspaper Analysts. According to Editor & Publisher, Katherine Graham "said the Post has reached mid-mark in its productivity goals, and elimination of feather-bedding is one of the company's primary goals. She said the paper has 50 surplus printers on its payroll, and with the introduction of a Raytheon system in 1979, the paper's work force will be reduced by 200 people." Unfortunately, patient reader, this will not affect feather-bedding on the op-ed page. Most of those goof-offs are syndicated, and while the technology is already available to write Joseph Kraft's column by computer, the industry has to maintain traditions somewhere.

THE HOW CAN YOU TELL IF THEY'RE COMPETENT AND COMPASSIONATE IF YOU CAN'T REACH THEM AWARD

To the WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATION for its new Centrex telephone system, which was apparently installed by the Board of Elections.

THE COMPETENCE WITHOUT COMPASSION AWARD

To AL RUSSO, for beating up a would-be mugger.

THE RITZIEST JOINT IN TOWN AWARD

To MAURICE CULLINANE'S KNEE

THE STEVE MARTIN AWARD

To JOHN WILSON

THE BEST MAYOR WE'VE HAD THIS CENTURY AWARD

To MARION BARRY. We know this seems premature but we might not get another chance to give it to him.

THE GRATUITOUS AID TO OPPRESSED PEOPLES AWARD

To JULIAN BOND of Georgia who said he was thinking about running for senator from DC.

SUPERFLUOUS SOLON OF THE YEAR AWARD

To WILLIAM SPAULDING

LOCKING THE BARN DOOR BEFORE THE HORSES ARE IN AWARD

To ARRINGTON DIXON for choosing William Spaulding to head the government operations committee of the council.

THE ONLY THE DEVOTED GET SCREWED AWARD

To BETTY ANN KANE and HILDA MASON, two of the most competent members of the council, who didn't get any committee to chair.

THE CALIFORNIA REALLY MUST BE AHEAD OF US AWARD

To the LOS ANGELES RAMS for firing George Allen after the Rams's first two exhibition games.

THE REVOLVING DOOR GATHERS NO MOSS AWARD

To BETTS ABEL, formerly with Don't Tear It Down, who has turned up as a consultant to Oliver Carr, one of the city's leading down-tearers; and to KIRK WHITE, formerly with the Municipal Planning Office, who left that job to become a zoning lawyer.

THE PLAYMOBIL SUPER DOWNTOWN SET (A STARTER SET OF PEOPLE MAY BE PURCHASED SEPARATELY) AWARD

To the PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION for redundant assistance to developers with an oak leaf cluster for industrial design given for its plan to erect two 140-foot pylons on the avenue inspired by the Trac-Two razor blade.

THE GOLDEN ABACUS AWARD

To WALTER FAUNTROY, without whose arithmetic of power, we might have become a state.

THE NEW YORK CITY MUST REALLY BE BEHIND US AWARD

To NEW YORK CITY for hiring Comer Coppie to straighten out its financial problems.

NONRESIDENT COMMUTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

To PATRICK LEAHY, for trying to stop the city from making a damn fool of itself over the convention center.

THE WOODROW WILSON ACTIVISM AWARD

To the DC DEPT. OF RECREATION, which took about as long to build the Wilson Pool as it took America to get into World War I.



THE EXCUSE ME WHILE I STEP INTO MY PHONE BOOTH AWARD: To Dave Clarke, who, faster than a speeding Schwinn, announced he was thinking about running for Marion Barry's at-large council seat — one month after he won reelection as a Ward One councilmember and one month before he took the oath swearing to fulfill the duties thereof.

THE I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE CITY BUT I KNOW WHAT I LIKE AWARD

To J. CARTER BROWN, who, as chair of the Fine Arts Commission, has created an aesthetic vacuum on that body in matters like the Rhodes Tavern case — treating the city as though it were another wing of his gallery.

PEOPLE WE DON'T HAVE TO KICK AROUND ANYMORE AND WE'RE GLAD AWARD

To STERLING TUCKER, CHARLES DIGGS and GEORGE ALLEN

PEOPLE WE DON'T HAVE TO KICK AROUND ANY MORE & WE'RE KIND OF SAD AWARD

To WALTER WASHINGTON, COMER COPPIE, SHARI KHARASCH and NORVEL PERKINS

LAW AND ORDER AWARD

To Capitol Police officers PATRICK C. HINES and STEPHEN M. CZWARTACKI, who were held up last June on a Capitol parking lot by two bandits who stole their revolvers, wallets and wrist watches as well as a portable radio and then left the officers tied up with their own handcuffs.

And to Capitol Police Captain HARRY GREVEY who said of the incident, "The gunmen apparently had no respect for the law."

SIGN OF THE TIMES AWARD

"WE'VE LOST OUR LEASE."

THE INFLATION FIGHTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

To BLACKIE AUGUR, who is accused by the city government of improperly charging his employees at Baskin-Robbins for the ice cream cones they eat on the job.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT FIGHTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

To the CITY COUNCIL for using funds from a federal program for the jobless to enlarge its staff.

THE STERLING BEHAVIOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

To ARRINGTON DIXON, who, even before taking office, was doing his predecessor one better by still further centralizing the chair's control over the council.

PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARD

To Patricia Harris, HUD Secretary, for finding a job for Sterling Tucker, who otherwise might have gone into court and demanded a whole new primary election.

KEEPING THE CARRS OFF THE STREET AWARD

To the citizens of DUPONT CIRCLE who came up with their own plan for their community and have been fighting a brave battle to keep the land-grabbers downtown.

THE TARDY PRESCIENCE AWARD

To POLLY SHACKLETON, who in the closing days of the mayoral campaign, endorsed Sterling Tucker.

THE CARRYING COALS TO NEWCASTLE AWARD

To WALTER E. WASHINGTON, who took home various mementos from his decade in office, including the key to the city of Saigon.

THE WHAT WAS HAPPENING WHILE EVERYONE ELSE WAS LEARNING ABOUT COMPETENCY BASED CURRICULUM AWARD

To the DC PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, which selected Lucy Baker to be valedictorian of Spingarn High School, then forgot to send her academic transcript to Georgetown University, the college of her choice. GU had requested the transcript twice without avail. It finally took the intervention of superintendent Vince Reed to get the matter straightened out.

THE COMER COPPIE BUDGETARY EXCELLENCE AWARD

To MARION BARRY for proposing, as a means of increasing city revenues, that there be chariot races down Pennsylvania Avenue.

THE RISING COST OF NOTHING AWARD

To the WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY for proposing a surcharge to be assessed against customers who significantly reduce their gas consumption because of installing heat pumps and other energy saving devices.

SECOND INFLATION FIGHTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

To PETER ESPINSHADE, a used book dealer on Connecticut Avenue, who, after his power was cut off by Pepco in a dispute over a bill, provided his customers with flashlights to browse by.

THE JIMMY WHO? AWARD

To JOHN RAY, who was virtually unknown a year ago, but who turned out to be Marion Barry's heir apparent on the city council.

THIRD INFLATION FIGHTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

To the CITY COUNCIL, for fixing \$15,000 in parking fees it owed the DC government. The council, at its last session of the year, passed legislation cancelling the debt.

*The Gazette Awards are the original local journalistic awards
Accept No Substitutes*

French of late joining the ranks of unindicted coconspirators for pandering to Nixon's DeGaulist fantasies with that political whimsy that has ruined more than one republic in the past.

We can not censure the students at Oxford for they were still on the playing fields of Eton when Nixon was last in a virulent stage, but the press should know better. Yet once again it engaged in mindless revisionism — at least one hopes Ms. Graham is not deliberately trying to recreate the Incredible Sulk she so ably destroyed. It's just that the old Nixon is no longer news; a new one would be. Consider just a few of the phrases used by the Post's Ronald Koven in a recent story on Nixon's Paris trip that appeared under the headline: "Nixon: Time Has Come to Speak Out."

"Former president Nixon served notice tonight that he considers the time has come for him to resume speaking out regularly on public issues after his relative silence since he resigned under the threat of impeachment over the Watergate scandal. . . Looking healthy and relaxed. . . chuckled. . . seemed genuinely touched. . ."

One might say that Koven was simply reporting what he saw, which is fair enough. But there is a certain selectivity in these matters. I have seen Mafia types appearing before congressional committees who looked "healthy and relaxed" but were never given journalistic credit for it. Prisoners before the bar often "snicker" but never "chuckle," and I don't remember anti-war arrestees ever being described as "genuinely touched" by the support of their advocates. Further, when Harold Stassen, a thoroughly decent if overly optimistic man, decides the time has come for him to speak out after his relative silence, the press openly ridicules him while granting Nixon all the credibility he seeks.

The press is caught, in these situations, in a trap of its own making, with one of its legs snared by its conviction that certain things are too stale to mention (increasingly including Watergate but certainly all of Nixon's numerous earlier misdeeds) and the other caught by the media's narrow definition of who is worth covering.

Thus readers too young to remember the Nixon-Douglas campaign or the Hughes loan or Checkers have no basis upon which to question the normalization of relations between Nixon and the nation now being carried out in the press.

Not only is the history suppressed but the present is inflated, because Richard Nixon is one of those who can always gain admission to the Studio 54 of journalism while hundreds of others get turned away — not because there are not newsworthy but because of the self-fulfilling argument that they are not sufficiently well-known.

Nixon, of course, is not the only beneficiary of journalism's selective admissions policy. The press has been trying to make Teddy Kennedy president for years and while he is, no doubt, an able legislator, he is not that many column inches more interesting than the numerous senators who only get mentioned on the

jump page. The extent to which this policy can affect politics can be seen in the recent Virginia senatorial campaign in which poor Andrew Miller had to campaign against Elizabeth Taylor, surely the most overpublicized woman in America. That Miller even managed to do as well as he did is a tribute to his efforts, because the press never let us forget the famous wife of Miller's eminently forgettable opponent. As for Miller, I never did learn if he had a wife at all.

The other current example of Studio 54 journalism is the press buildup of Henry Kissinger who would like to be a senator from New York. While there is at least a reasonable presumption that the foreign policy of Cyrus Vance will prove more productive than that of the slippery-mouthed, wiretapping Christmas Bomber, as far as the press is concerned Kissinger is the most important foreign minister since Metternich and he is being treated with an avalanche of interviews and stories certain to strike fear in the heart of any potential competitor for the Senate seat. The press acts as though it believes Kissinger should be the next senator from New York, and you can count on reading blessed little in coming months about Cambodia, Chile or the 33,000 pages of government phone transcripts that he spirited away to Nelson's Rockefeller's pad until the federal courts told him they weren't his. There are valid reasons why many people despise Kissinger; some like the Chileans and Iranians have more than others, but don't expect to find them part of the campaign coverage; Kissinger has journalistic immunity.

Worst Nixon Story Yet

I HAVE OBSERVED a significant increase in the level of cultural breast-beating of late, inspired by such events as the murders in San Francisco and the Jonestown massacre. I pay attention to these things not only because I like to keep track of the competition but because it has occurred to me that one of the problems with the oft-made analogy between the 70s and the 50s is that there was significantly more social criticism during the 50s, ranging from the beat poets to William Whyte. Today's critics are more emulative of the Fonz than of Keroauc. But a healthy note of righteous anger seems to be heard more often, symbolized most dramatically of late by the New Times's blast at American values in its closing issue. The most acerbic recent comments, though, come from that old practitioner of the art, Jules Feiffer. Alexander Cockburn, writing in the Dec. 11 Village Voice, quoted Feiffer's remarks at a testimonial dinner for Carey McWilliams at length, but here is just a bit of it:

Today's bearers of bad news often become celebrated on the spot. It's no longer a matter of 'say it ain't so' when we read of the latest awfulness. Now

it's a matter of 'more, more — I want to hear more.' These days we get off on how rotten everything is. It reinforces our belief that nothing can be done. It gives us the excuse we require to ensure that we do nothing. . . .

What seems to have happened, as far as I can tell, is that having been obsessed by Nixon for years, then having gotten rid of Nixon, we all discovered something missing in our lives, something that had carried us through the fifties into the seventies. We missed the Nixon in our lives. We were a nation who cast out Nixon and then pined, pined physically for Nixon. But not having Nixon, we did the next best thing, we became Nixon. We embraced the measliness, the miserliness, the nastiness. Nixon moved into the American soul and took up residence. It was about the time that the movie The Exorcist came out.

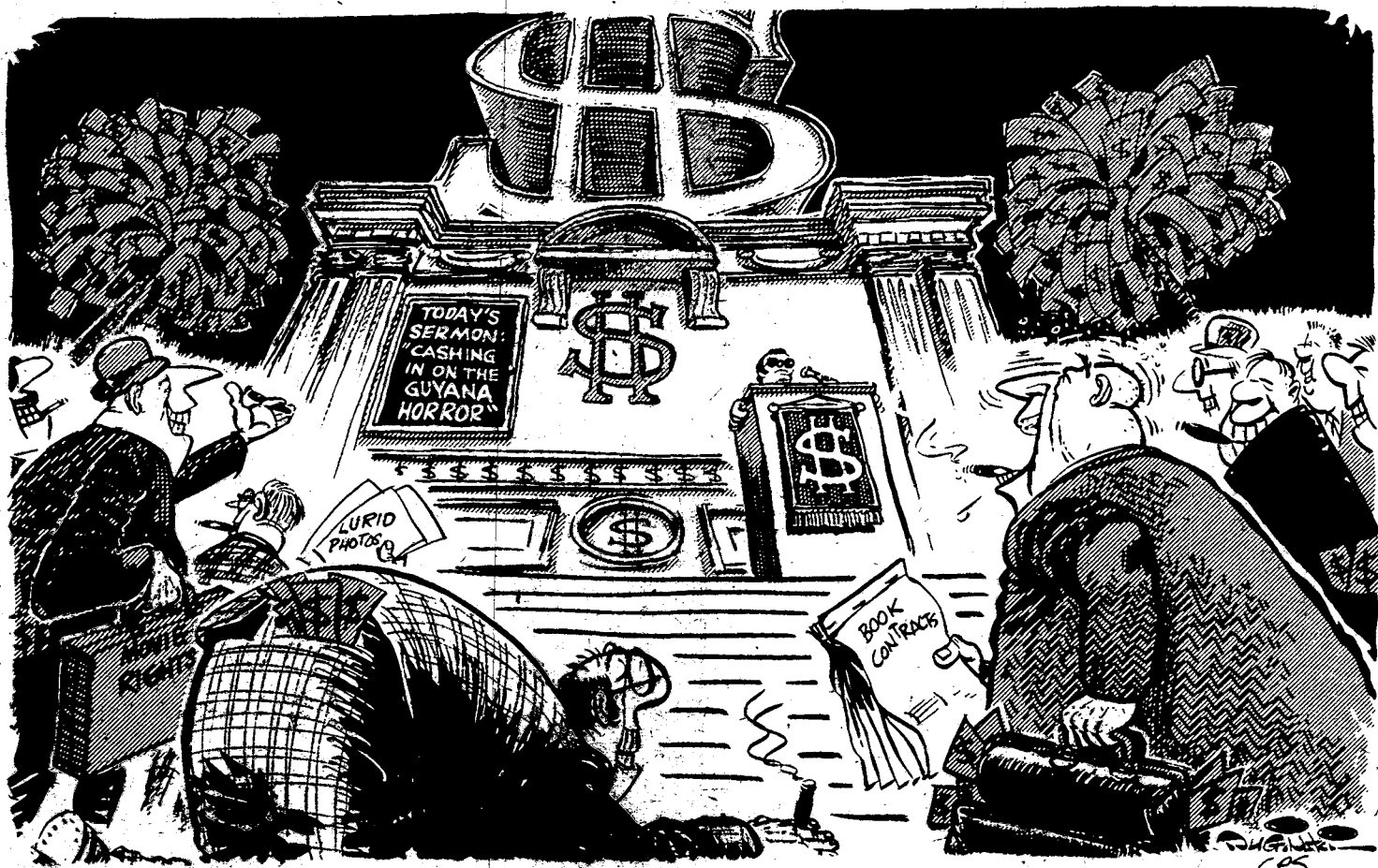
The Media Revue

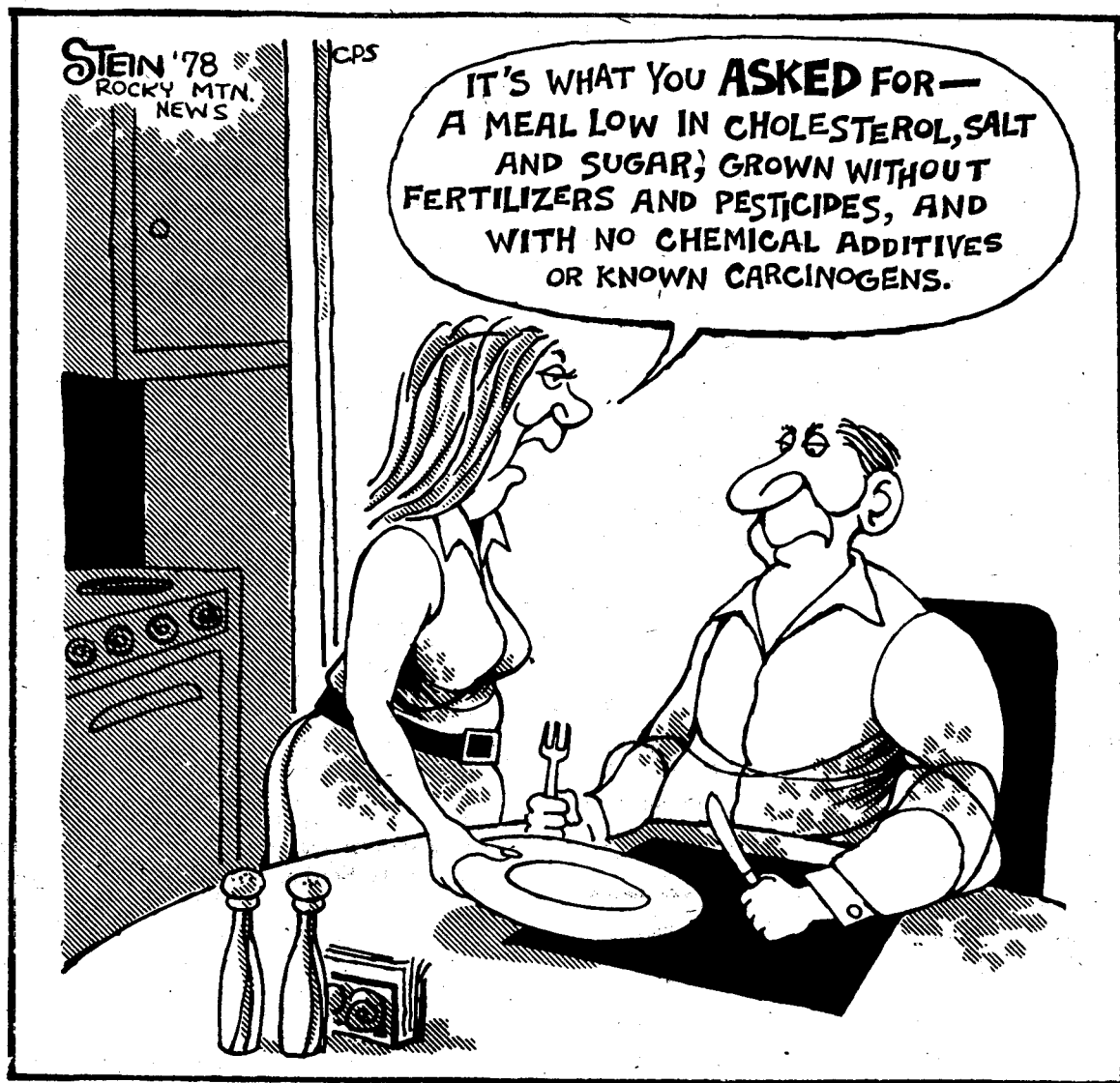
I WRITE THIS over the Christmas holidays, hoping mightily that Time and its workers at the Star will have reached an accord by the time this comes out. Time had threatened to closed the place if contract terms were not agreed upon by New Year's, a threat which did not seem a bluff. It nearly ruined the joys of Christmas for me. I would gladly give up the ties, pajamas and the screwdriver sets if I could be assured of at least another year of my favorite lunchtime reading — the Capital Edition of the Star. The Star, after its takeover by Joe Albritton, became an exceptionally lively paper and while it has lost some of its verve in recent months (the prospect of imminent unemployment stiffens the fingers) it remained a far more readable and entertaining product than its stuffy sister on 15th St. I shall curse Time if it ever kills the Star, but one must, at some point, face reality, which in this case is that if the Star folded, Time would save enough money in one year to pay off two-thirds of Cleveland's debt.

The worse thing about the loss of the Star would be the effect it would have on the Post, which has already proved that you don't need to be interesting to sell papers, and which would consolidate its turgidity by replacing the last of its decent writers. I was relieved to see that Coleman McCarthy is doing a column for a running journal; it is doubtful whether his thoughtful writing would be cost-effective in a one-paper town.

Things have gotten so bad at the Post that I have started reading Bill Gold again. Gold is one of those artifacts of an earlier age who writes concerning mildly interesting trivia, continuous updates on his pet peeves and, during the Christmas season, endless accounts of people laundering their contributions to Children's Hospital through his column. I find it all gaining a new lease on life thanks to the declining competition of the other pages.

"NOW THIS IS MY KIND OF CULT!"





The Post has gone to great lengths to imitate the stolidity of the New York Times, but without the flair for ancillary color and quotation or eccentric stories that occasionally make the Times bearable. And, if one is to believe Richard Reeves, its efforts have been unrewarded, at least in New York City. Writing in the recent Esquire, Reeves said,

"The Washington Post, in fact, may have been the big loser in the New York strike. Many people really read it in the absence of the Times and learned what I found out when I had it delivered to my door in Washington: The Post makes you want to run around the corner to Morgan Pharmacy and get a Times and find out what's really going on in the world. At least in New York, no one is mentioning the Post and the Times in the same breath anymore. The Washington pretender is just not a comprehensive newspaper; the Times is. And now, with a technological edge, the Times is probably going to leave the Post where it found it, a local paper that happens to be in the nation's capital."

YOU CAN WRITE THAT off to Applecentricity, but there are some other differences between the Times and the Post that are less amenable to provincial interpretations. For example, the Post Guild unit claims that Times salaries for editorial and commercial employees top those at the Post by 16.7%. And whereas preferential profit-sharing at the Post is closed to all but a few top executives, Times employees are occasionally given the chance to buy company stock at a discount. The stock purchase plan was offered in each of the last two years and intermittently before that.

The Guild workers at the Post are still engaged in negotiations over a new contract to replace the one that expired two and one half years ago. This, of course, befits the more leisurely literary style of the Post, as opposed to Timesque abruptness at the Star, but it doesn't seem to help morale much, especially since the Times is a less profitable paper than the Post yet is more generous to its employees, in the Guild's view. The Post is well enough off, for example, that we hear tell that it is thinking of starting a p.m. tabloid in this town should the Star fold -- something that could, in its early years, prove quite expensive.

The p.m. tabloid rumor is interesting because it at last gives the Post a justification for its unabashed enthusiasm for building a subway at any cost, but from an editorial point of view it is about as absurd as Rupert Murdoch owning the Village Voice. But one must, unfortunately, become resigned to absurdity in journalism these days.

As for its more immediate problems, the Post's

basic attitude appears to be that of its chief negotiator Larry Wallace, who is quoted as saying, "We're not pleading inability to pay. We know the Washington Post corporation is profitable. We intend to keep it that way."

The Guild, however, may not be the only obstacle in the way of such a goal. Even if the Star is killed or contained, there is reason for considerable angst at the top. Despite rising circulations at papers like the Post, more and more people aren't reading any daily. The Post's circulation is not keeping up with the rise in population. Newspapers have gone to extraordinary lengths to change this situation -- flashy new layouts, new supplements etc. -- but it doesn't seem to be working. Supplements like the Star's "Home Life" and the Times's "SportsMonday" are a desperate attempt to reach out to people who are bored with newspapers. When you clear away the layout clutter, however, you find you are still left with basically the same old newspaper. Granted that Walter Cronkite's whole broadcast would fit on the front page of the Times, nonetheless, this is today for many people an entirely satisfactory state of affairs. The Times, which has long promised all the news that's fit to print now finds that many regard this as a form of gluttony. They would, one suspects, prefer a paper that promised "As Little News As You Can Get Away With and Not Be Embarrassed In Front Of Your Friends." Either that or American daily journalism could go all the way with the spirit of the times and change the names of its papers to ones like "The Morning Self-Fulfiller" or the "Evening Jogger."

There is another problem, with which the Star attempted to cope through its regionally zoned editions, and that is that metropolitan newspapers have market areas that exceed the journalistic interest areas of their readers. While it's grand to boast of one's coverage of the metropolitan region, I've never met a single ordinary soul who described themselves as living in the "metropolitan region." Newspapers and councils of governments serve metropolitan regions, but people live in real places and those are the places they want to read about. Try as metro dailies do to increase regional consciousness, readers remain hopelessly provincial. It is another example of the inefficiencies of scale that may some day prove fatal even to as seemingly strong an institution as the Post. Papers like the Post basically serve a readership that exists in the minds of its business managers and advertisers but not in those of its readers.

One of the new shows planned for TV next fall is called "This is Your Breakdown," featuring Rosemary Clooney, Neil Sedaka, Rick Nelson and Bill Veeck -- among others -- describing their misfortunes and nervous breakdowns.

AND there are even worse threats. On the very day and on the very page that the Post reported mean talk about newspaper monopolies from the Carter administration, there was a story about the first low-cost computer time-sharing network designed for the home. Initially, this remarkable system, to be operated by a McLean, Va., firm, will provide access at off-peak hours to 1800 computer programs on file, ranging from games like Star Trek to accounting and text editing systems. The cost will be \$2.75 an hour, or one-fifth to one-tenth normal commercial computer costs. The Post story noted, "The network approach that DBC offers will provide such options as electronic mail for all users of the system, as well as classified ads. . . . Individuals may store and transmit text through the system."

Classified ads, indeed! The end of the daily newspaper as we know it may come sooner than anticipated. No, wait, there's still worse. DBC is negotiating with Davey Marlin Jones for entertainment reviews "and with others that DBC will not reveal." Imagine: Evans & Novak every morning in bed from your DBC system as your Radio Shack home computer brews your coffee.

In short, it may not be too many years before we are worrying about saving the Post as well as the Star, which gives merit to the words of former LBJ press secretary George Reedy, who told the FTC symposium on newspaper monopolies:

"We may be thinking about an institution that is no longer what we think it is. . . . one that may be something of a museum piece. . . . We should not try to reverse something I regret very deeply but examine how we continue to be a free people with a healthy, vigorous dialogue not now in the daily press."

AND WHILE WE'RE considering things, let us consider the following before retiring upstairs to catch Davey Marlin Jones on the computer: The Washington Star reported last month that Arthur Burns, ex-chair of the Federal Reserve, believes that recessions can be useful, and that it's a mistake for a government to press too hard to prevent them: "Furthermore, 'adversity has its uses in a nation's life,' Burns said, citing the lessons taught by the Depression of the 1930s and the inflation of recent years." Well, at least there's one man who practices what he preaches.

—WALDROP FENSTER

Pennsylvania Commerce Secretary Norval Reece asked an aide to give him "a list of male and female employees in the Commerce Department, broken down by sex" for an affirmative action study. A memo came back to Reece saying, "We have no male or female employees broken down by sex, but we do have two alcoholics."

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LAW AND ORDER IN FREEPORT

SOME of the best crime reporting we've seen of late appears weekly in the Freeport [Me.] Post, in a column called "Freeport Police Log." Over recent months we have been avidly following the travails of officers Shorey, Carter, Fulmer and Sloat as they maintain law and order in the town of Freeport. It's not an easy job because, along with the normal chaos caused by drugs, break-ins, and intoxicated pedestrians, they must also face the perplexities of 80-year old women ditching their husbands and hiking along I-95, lost ganders, a possible moose at the Pownal exit and dogs falling into swimming pools. But, as can be seen from these excerpts, it's all in a day's work.

SUNDAY, JUNE 11

730 PM: LL Bean reported that some people in a Pennsylvania car might have stolen two canoes. Officer Walker and Carter located the car on I-95 northbound and found the boats were in the custody of their owners.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14

1000 PM: A barking dog was reported on Bow Street. Officer Gillespie asked the owner to quiet the dog and she said she would do her best.

THURSDAY, JUNE 15

1150 AM: Officer Shorey sanded the hull of the town boat.

1008 PM: Officer Sloat received a report of a woman screaming on Pine Street. He found it was a lovers' spat.

FRIDAY, JUNE 16

900 AM: Officer Shorey finished sanding the hull and applied one coat of bottom paint to the town boat.

950AM: A streaker was reported at the town dump. The man was described as wearing a mask. Officer Fusselman checked the area without success.

SATURDAY, JUNE 17

930AM: Officer Shorey applied a second coat of bottom paint to the town boat.

230 PM: Officer Walker attempted to locate an 80-year-old woman on I-95. She had had a quarrel with her husband and decided to walk.

300 PM: Officer Walker located the woman and assisted with the reunion.

MONDAY, JUNE 26

1205: A Poland Road resident alleged that two youths in a blue vehicle attempted to steal a bag of chicken feed from his driveway. The man said he warned the youths and then fired two rounds from his .32 Special into a tree to scare them away. Officer Carter examined the holes in the tree, took two spent cartridges as evidence and warned the man about the potential consequences of injuring anyone.

TUESDAY, JUNE 27

720 PM: A possible drunk driver was reported at the Rail Tavern. Officer Fulmer found the man sitting

in his truck on Main Street. The man did not appear drunk. Fulmer advised him to wait a reasonable period of time and then drive straight home very carefully.

THURSDAY, JUNE 29

630 PM: A South Freeport Road resident reported that some people in a maroon Oldsmobile had stopped in front of his house, and given something to his dog. When he asked what they were doing, they replied they were feeding the dog. The man checked the area and found a tennis ball slit open with some type of pill inside. He threw it away and called Officer Fusselman.

FRIDAY, JUNE 30

115 PM: Officers Sloat and Roberts located the maroon Oldsmobile at Winslow Park. They spoke with the owner, who said he had found the tennis ball at the park and didn't know if there was anything in it.

THURSDAY, JULY 6

952 AM: Officer Shorey removed a California man from the Falcon Restaurant at the owner's request. Shorey and Officer Roberts later gave the man a ride to Yarmouth on his way to Chebeague Island.

315 PM: Officer Shorey met with Archie Roos to discuss boat maintenance.

FRIDAY, JULY 7

1055 PM: A possible assault was reported at Mario's Restaurant. Officers Fulmer, Fusselman and Gillespie found it was only a family disagreement and advised the subjects to return to Yarmouth.

TUESDAY, JULY 18

1150 AM: A Brunswick Road woman reported seeing a hitchhiker deposit a white envelope in the bushes off I-95. Officer Sloat found a white styrofoam coffee cup.

815 PM: A Wardtown Road man came to police headquarters and reported that a neighbor had threatened to beat him up if he didn't stop working on his car at 11 pm.

TUESDAY, JULY 25

1230 PM: A High View woman reported that her father had let someone from the Clam Festival borrow his truck and she would like to have it returned. She said her father didn't know who had the truck and didn't seem worried about it. Office Whitehouse said he would try to find the truck but could do nothing to recover it unless the father filed a complaint.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6

530 PM: Officer Carter warned two subjects about picking blueberries on the Murch Road.

750 PM: Officer Fulmer requested a juvenile to get off the mail box at the corner of Mechanic and Main Streets. He did.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 8

550 PM: On the request of Brunswick police Officer Gillespie stopped a car with Massachusetts license plates regarding the theft of some gas. The subjects made good on their debt.

1200 midnight: Officer Gillespie investigated a suspicious vehicle reported on Flying Point Road and Wolef's Neck Road. He discovered the subjects, who were lost, and gave them directions.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12

145 pm: Large traffic jams at the corner of Morse and Main Streets resulted when all of LL Beans parking lots were full. Officer Sloat directed traffic and advised Bean's Parking Boys to turn away would-be parkers.

920 PM: Officer Roberts went to a loud party at a residence on Baker Road. The party quieted down.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 22

340 AM: A broken window at Soule School was noted by Officer Schofield.

900 AM: An Elm Street resident reported that she had received a telephone call from an unknown man who claimed to work for Lady Grace apparel. He inquired about her preference in underwear and said he would visit soon with samples to show her. Officer Gillespie advised the caller not to open the door to any stranger, but to call the police and then attempt to see the man and his license plate from the window.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27

540 PM: A Mass. resident was informed about the open liquor container law in Maine by Officer Fulmer, who poured the contents of his beer bottle out on Main Street.

MONDAY, AUGUST 28

115 PM: A Summer Street resident reported that a stray dog had taken a duck and run off. Officer Whitehouse reported ten minutes later that the duck had been recovered.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30

145 AM: A man crawling around the floor at the laundromat was questioned by Officer Sloat. The man said he had permission to be there and was looking for money. Sloat planned to check on the permission.

1113 AM: A Mass. resident was warned about driving on the sidewalk.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

420 PM: Kids moved their bikes from the sidewalk in front of Freeport Variety in order to make room for pedestrians, at the request of Officer Fulmer.

1010 PM: While investigating a suspicious person at the Middle School, Officer Walker was relieved to learn it was only Clayton Carlin, science teacher, feeding his spiders.

1020 PM: Officers Fulmer and Gillespie joined forces to battle a trash can blaze at the corner of Main and Mechanic Streets.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

1243 AM: Officer Walker stopped a vehicle on Main Street that seemed to be operated by a driver under the influence. The driver, a Wolf Neck resident, was having an allergy attack.

1105 AM: Officer Shorey on patrol took a holiday cruise around Williams Island, French Island and Royal River.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

630 PM: Officers Shorey, Walker and Fulmer found themselves with some free time on their hands when their Drug Abuse class at Brunswick High School was cancelled.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2

840 AM: A Pine Street resident complained to police that her mailbox had been pulled out of the ground and smashed on Halloween night. She reported that the same thing happens to her mailbox (valued at \$20) every Halloween.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10

1245 AM: A cow was secured by Officers Carter and Fulmer at the Fogg residence from its afternoon escape from the pasture.

330 PM: A family problem at a local motel was reported and Officer Fulmer officiated.

845 PM: Officer Sloat repaired blown fuse in a cruiser's rear lights and dash. The fuses were made available by the fire department.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12

810 AM: Officer Carter responded to a call at the Brogan residence for a dog unable to get out a pool. In the process of getting the dog out of the pool, the dog bit Officer Carter.

855 AM: Officer Carter went back on duty after changing his trousers at home.

THE GAZETTE BOOKSHELF

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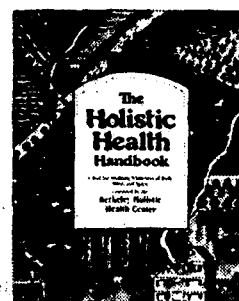
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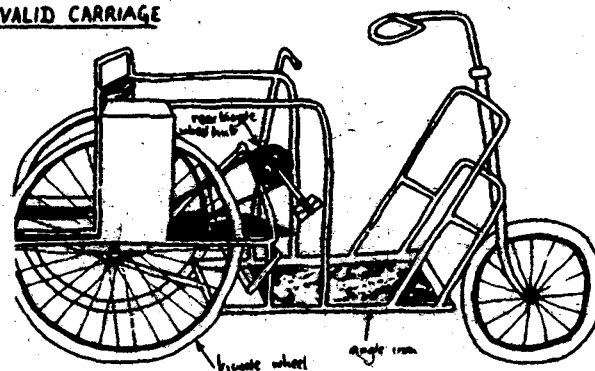
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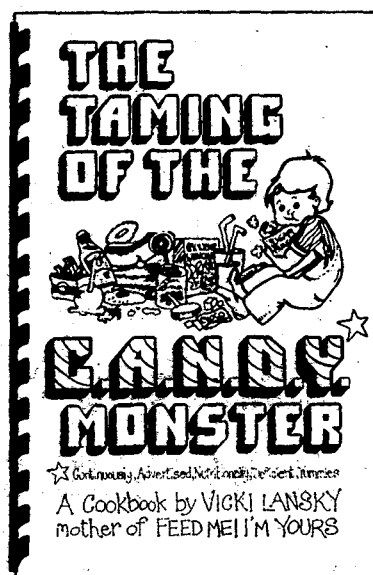
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